



## Site Activities Update

### Devil's Swamp Lake Site

East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana

September, 2015

#### This Fact Sheet will tell you about...

- **SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION**
- **REPORTS COMPLETED TODATE**
- **WHAT HAPPENS NOW**
- **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**
- **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**
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#### SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

Devil's Swamp Lake is a man-made, crescent-shaped lake located on the Mississippi River east bank floodplain, approximately ten miles north of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. (Shown on the Site vicinity map included as Figure 1-1). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers excavated the lake in 1973 and 1974 to provide material for levee construction along the north and west sides of the Port of Greater Baton Rouge Terminal (Baton Rouge Barge Harbor).

#### REPORTS COMPLETED TODATE

On May 2015 the EPA issued a Fact Sheet that presents the Superfund Process and describes the work performed during a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). Under the heading RI/FS Progress, investigations, sampling events and reports completed so far are described.

#### WHAT HAPPENS NOW

On August 12, 2015, the state of Louisiana, through the Departments of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Wildlife & Fisheries (DWF), issued and updated the advisory for Devil's Swamp/Bayou

Baton Rouge. This update is based on limited sampling data from 2012-2014 and supersedes a previous advisory issued for the area on July 9, 1993.

The state agencies advise not to eat fish or crawfish from this area, and continue to advise the public not to swim nor participate in other primary contact sports in the area of concern.

DHH, DEQ and DWF issued this advisory under the Louisiana *Protocol for Issuing Public Health Advisories for Chemical Contaminants in Recreationally Caught Fish and Shellfish*. DEQ and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Remedial Program will continue with the remedial investigation of the Devil's Swamp Lake Superfund Site. (Superfund Process Figure 1.2)

#### QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Question: What are the contaminants of concern?

Answer: Mercury and Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCBs).

Question: What is the source of these contaminants?

The specific source for the mercury is unclear, this is a large industrial area with multiple facilities that may have contributed to the presence of mercury, or it may not be from any specific source.

At this time, it appears the PCBs are related to the former Rollins facility that operated in the

1970s. The facility that currently operates out of the former Rollins facility is no longer discharging PCBs into the body of water.

Question: Is this area physically accessible to the public?

Answer: No, Devil's Swamp has several owners and is private property with difficult access. The Devil's Swamp Lake is located within the swamp, is on private property and fencing located to the east normally limits its access. No public access is available at this time.

Question: If someone has eaten fish from the area in the past, should this be cause for health problems?

Answer: No, eating small amounts of fish or crawfish in the past may not result in observable health effects, only prolonged exposure from frequent consumption over many years could potentially negatively impact human health.

Question: Are crawfish abundant in Devil's Swamp Lake?

Answer: The EPA and state agencies recognize few crawfish have been found at the lake during the 2012, 2013 and 2014 sampling events.

Question: Might this contamination impact the local drinking water supply?

Answer: All water in the site area comes from deep groundwater wells that are in no way threatened by the releases in Devil's Swamp Lake. To alleviate community concerns, EPA, in coordination with DEQ and DHH sampled in the wells that are a source of drinking water to the community and found no contaminations.

Question: How can the public be kept informed on current what's happening?

Answer: EPA and DEQ provide site information in their websites and EPA keeps a site mailing list where the public can register to receive future updates by mail.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

The first part of the remedial investigation, the Tier 1 RI report was completed on February 2012 and is available in the site repository. This report covers sampling results for water and sediment samples collected in the swamp and lake. The second part of the investigation, the Tier 2 RI report will be complete by [date](#) and copies will be placed in the repository. This report covers sampling for fish, crawfish and additional soil and sediment samples.

The Tier 2 RI report also includes the Human Health and the Ecological Baseline Risk Assessments. Results of these assessments indicate that while the wildlife don't show an unacceptable risk, the long term frequent ingestion of fish and crawfish, from the area, over a lifetime could pose a risk to people.

EPA's calculated risk numbers are low and fall within the target range which the agency strives to manage risks as part of a Superfund cleanup. Therefore, the RI/FS will continue to move forward and a Feasibility Study will be prepared to identify technologies and alternatives that will cleanup the site and reduce current risk levels.

The Feasibility Study (part of the ongoing RI/FS) will result in a preferred alternative. It will be presented in a Proposed Plan and available for the public to comment, prior to the EPA selecting a final remedy.

The suspected source of PCBs is the nearby hazardous waste site, originally operated by Rollins Environmental Services. This former facility is now owned by Baton Rouge Disposal, LLC. Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc., on their behalf, has completed a state ordered cleanup and continue to work with the EPA and DEQ in performing the upcoming Superfund study.

## WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

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EPA Superfund Remedial Project Manager  
214.665.6662 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

### Bill Little

EPA Community Involvement Coordinator/SEE  
214.665.8131 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

### Donn Walter

Regional Public Liaison  
214.665.6483 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

### Keith Horn

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
225.219.3793 or 866.896.5337 (toll-free)

### Site Repository

Scotlandville Branch Library  
7373 Scenic Hwy  
Baton Rouge, LA 70807

Local fishers or community members should contact DHH at 1-888-293-7020 with any further questions related to the fish advisory.

**All inquiries from the media should be 214.665.2200.**

### Devil's Swamp Lake Superfund Site

[www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/pdffiles/0600652.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/pdffiles/0600652.pdf)

<http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/pdffiles/devils-swamp-la.pdf>

**Figure 1.1**

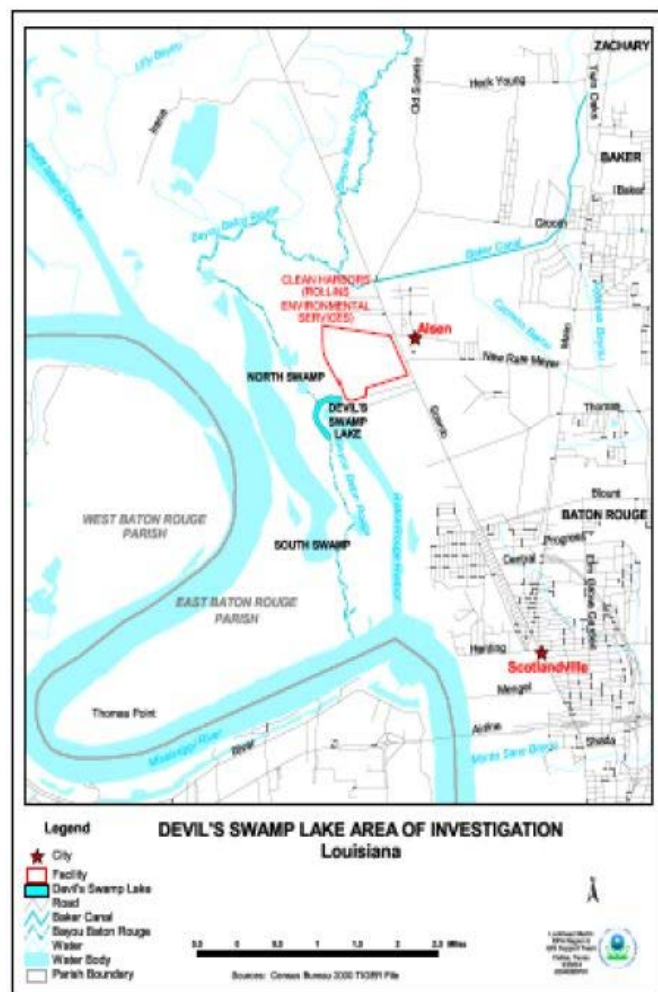


Figure 1.2

